

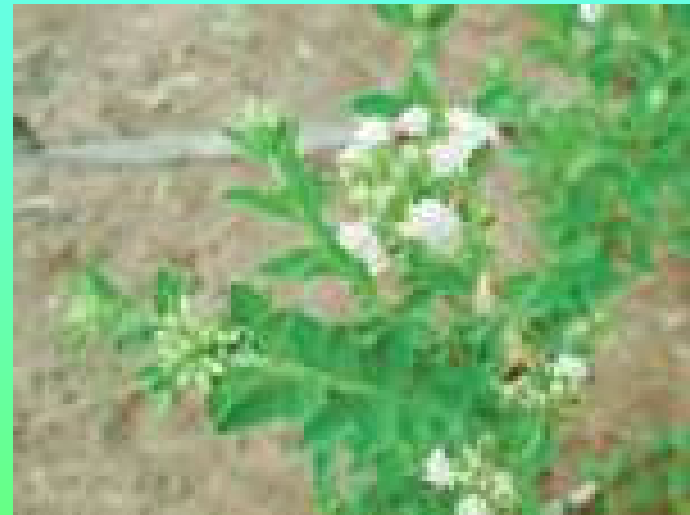
*The incredible and sad
history of the innocent
Stevia
and her heartless
exploiters*



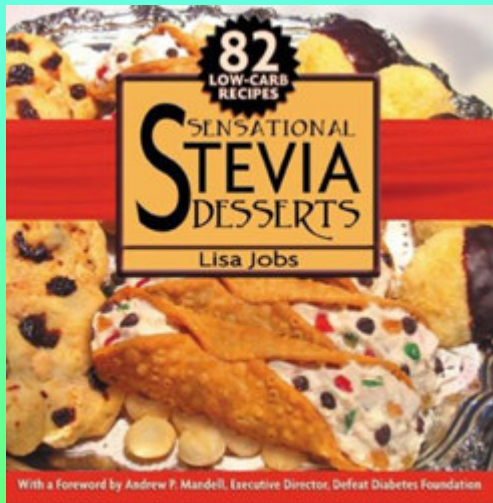
What is Stevia?

'Ka'a he'é in ne'e Guaraní

“Stevia is one of the most health restoring plants on earth. What whole leaf Stevia does both inside the body and on the skin is incredible. **Native to Paraguay**, it is a small green plant bearing leaves which have a delicious and refreshing taste that can be 30 times sweeter than sugar. Besides the intensely sweet glycosides (Steviosides, Rebaudiosides and a Dulcoside), various studies have found the leaf to contain proteins, fiber, carbohydrates, iron, phosphorus, calcium, potassium, sodium, magnesium, zinc, rutin (a flavonoid), true vitamin A, Vitamin C and an oil which contains 53 other constituents. (www.stevia.com”, *emphasis added*)



The Sweetener of the Future



- “Stevia is the sweetener of the future. Because the human body does not metabolize the sweet glycosides (they pass right through the normal elimination channels) from the leaf or any of its processed forms, the body obtains no calories from Stevia. Processed forms of pure Stevia can be 70-400 times sweeter than sugar. Whether these products are called Stevia, Stevioside, Rebaudioside, Stevia Extract, or Stevia Concentrate, if they are in their pure unadulterated form they do not adversely affect blood glucose levels and may be used freely by both diabetics and hypoglycemics. For people with blood sugar, blood pressure or weight problems Stevia is the most desirable sweetener.” (www.stevia.com)
- US sweetener market is expected to increase 4% per year, reaching 1 bn USD in 2010

Many additional uses

- **Stevia for Exceptional Skin Care**
Water based whole leaf Stevia concentrate offers several exceptional benefits when used regularly in skin care. When applied as a facial mask it effectively softens and tightens the skin, smoothes out wrinkles and helps to heal various skin blemishes including acne.In Paraguayan experiments the Stevia concentrate was added to a unique native herbal soap made from edible oils extracted from the seeds and leaves of trees native to the Paraguayan rain forest. Marketed in the U.S. under the name Cream of Coco Hair & Body Shampoo, the soap blends well with the concentrate.



The advertisement for SweetLeaf Stevia is presented in a vertical rectangular format. At the top, the brand name "SweetLeaf" is written in a white serif font, with a stylized leaf logo above it, and "STEVIA" is written in a smaller, white sans-serif font below. The middle section features a photograph of various Stevia products, including a green mug, a box of "Herb Tea", and several small bottles. Below this image, the text "Naturally Sweet!" is followed by "0 Calories/Carbs" and "0 Glycemic Index" in a bold, black font. The next section shows a box of "SweetLeaf Stevia" with a "100% Natural" label and a picture of a cup of tea. At the bottom, there is a row of five small glass bottles with black caps, labeled "Liquid Stevia Flavors!". The final section at the bottom of the ad has a dark green background with the text "Safe for Diabetics & Hypoglycemics" in white.

SweetLeaf
STEVIA

Naturally Sweet!
0 Calories/Carbs
0 Glycemic Index

Liquid Stevia Flavors!

Safe for Diabetics
& Hypoglycemics

The coke of the future

On 24 May 2007, Coca-cola filed 24 patents on the most useful compounds of Stevia.

- Their ultra-secret research to find the “ultimate sweetener” was done in partnership with Cargill
- Coca-cola will have exclusively worldwide rights for its beverage products, Cargill has rights to use the “natural” sweetener in its food products.
- They call it “rebiana”.
- Cargill has approached FDA to allow it as a food additive in the US. Until now it is allowed as dietary supplement only
- It is allowed in other countries, including Japan, China, Brazil, where it is expected to be on the market very soon



Market potential

- "We've known about this for a long time," said James May, president and founder of SweetLeaf Stevia, based in Gilbert, Ariz., which first introduced stevia to the U.S. market in 1982. SweetLeaf has considered gathering the research and preparing the application for FDA approval, but for a small company the cost has been prohibitive. However, May sees a bright future for stevia. ***He said its safety is demonstrated by 1,500 years of traditional use in Paraguay*** and 13 years since the passage of DSHEA without a single reported adverse event.
- "It's going to be the biggest, most desirable sweetener in America, and eventually on the Earth," May said. The current U.S. stevia market is only about \$16 million, but that may be largely because of its dietary supplement status, and the fact that FDA prohibits manufacturers from mentioning its sweetening ability.

Who invented this sweetener?

- May sees huge growth potential in both the tabletop-sweetener category, valued at \$500 million annually, and in the beverage market. But he said he is also concerned that Coca-Cola and Cargill may push the original players to the sideline. "Right now my company has 80 percent of the stevia sales in America," May said. "Now that the pioneers have done the work and proved the efficacy, are they going to take over?"
- What is your reaction to Coca-Cola and Cargill finally agreeing to market a sweetener that is essentially Stevia?
- "A little part of me was a little angry and a bit jealous that Coke is making it seem like they suddenly discovered this new sweetener."

A Must-Read Q&A with Body Ecology Founder Donna Gates

Reactions of the Paraguayan government

- In 1997 a group of NGO representatives asked Paraguayan senator Nunez to protect Ka'a he'é, and develop an ABS law, but no action was undertaken
- There is no ABS legislation or any concrete initiative to develop such legislation
- Current Minister of Industry and Commerce José Maria Ibanez has welcomed the decision by Coca-Cola and Cargill to invest in Ka'a he'é and hopes they will invest in a factory in Paraguay
- He hopes it will expand Ka'a he'é production from 2 to 50 thousand hectares

The Guarani people receive no benefits at all



Will they be allowed to use their own ka'a he'é?

- Due to the WTO TRIPs agreement, the Guarani peoples, and the Paraguayan people might have to start paying royalties over their very own ka'a he'é, which is widely used by native and non-native Paraguayans alike.
- Meanwhile, Paraguay is often blamed for allowing wide-scale piracy practices
- NGOs and IPOs have called for the government to protect ka'a he'é through a sui generis system, but there is no action expected from the current Colorado government

So should we all become pirates?

